



FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

January 20, 2010

Dear Life Group Leaders,

Can you hear me now? This week's study comes from Luke 8:16-21 and is about the importance of listening carefully to the Word of God. As you read this passage, you'll find it comes directly after the parable of the four soils. That's no coincidence! Nor is it a coincidence that Luke puts the story of Jesus' mother and brothers visiting Him at the end of this study. The whole section (verses 4—21) is a warning to be properly prepared when the Sower sows the good seed, which is the Word of God, in our hearts.

Last week we learned about four different kinds of listeners represented by the four soils. This week we learn about three ways to listen to God's Word. We can listen to share. We can listen to grow. We can listen to obey. But we must respond in one of those ways or even what we think we have will be taken away from us. In other words, "If you don't use it, you'll lose it."

To help you prepare for your discussion, I've included a message on the passage by Pastor John Piper in which he suggests several practical things we can do to become better listeners to God's Word. I hope you'll listen to it. I know you'll enjoy it. This week's coaching tip also includes two articles you'll find helpful—one on how to listen effectively to your small group members, and the second on what to do if they express strong emotions like anger or tears. You may also find the icebreaker useful and interesting. It's a fun activity that will involve everyone and give them a chance to get to know one another quickly and in ways they might not through conversation. Be sure to check it out!

Thanks again for your faithful leadership! Please let us know how we can pray for you or support you more effectively. We appreciate you!
Grateful in Christ,

Pastors Gary and Glen